

SARL NEWS SUNDAY 21 JULY 2013

You are listening to ZS6SRL, the official radio station of the South African Radio League, the national body for amateur radio in South Africa. The SARL broadcasts a news bulletin every Sunday at 08:15 CAT in Afrikaans and at 08:30 CAT in English. To listen to a web stream, visit www.sarl.org.za, click on 'Amateur Radio Today' and follow the links for details. For audio via Echolink, connect to ZS0JPL-R.

You can download this bulletin and previous ones from www.sarl.org.za and also subscribe there to receive future bulletins by e-mail.

SILENT KEYS

Ben de Waal, ZS6ET, passed away on Tuesday 16 July 2013 after a stroke from which he could not recover. For many years he was a friend for amateurs in the Vaal Triangle and also the active news reader for the Sasolburg Radio Club. His witty remarks ensured that all participated in lots of technical chats.

With regret we also announce the death of Ams Amenga, ZS6YV, on 17 July 2013 after a long fight against cancer. We will remember Ams as a keen amateur who was always willing to help his fellows. He leaves behind his wife Maxie, ZS6BJT and two sons Eltjo and Johan.

Your news reader this morning is (name and call sign), on 145,725 from Pretoria, with relays on 7,066 MHz and 3,695 MHz SSB. (Other news readers change to suit).

IN THE NEWS TODAY:

SARL TO EXHIBIT AT ESKOM EXPO FOR YOUNG SCIENTISTS HERE COMES THE SUN - THERE GOES THE SUN THE TRANSATLANTIC 144 MHz CHALLENGE

You are listening to ZS6SRL. Stay tuned for more details on these and other important and interesting items.

SARL TO EXHIBIT AT ESKOM EXPO FOR YOUNG SCIENTISTS

The South African Radio League will exhibit at the ESKOM Expo for Young Scientists to be held in Boksburg from 25 to 28 September 2013. The exhibit will include a HF and VHF station. The SARL is calling on young radio amateurs to man the exhibit and operate the radio station sharing with their peers the exciting world of amateur radio. If you are under 25 we call on you to be at the expo and tell other young people about your experience. To offer your participation in this exciting youth project, please send your contact details to youth@sarl.org.za. The Eskom Expo for Young Scientists has been running for over 30 years and has established itself as the premier exposition for the South African youth to demonstrate their innovation in the fields of science and technology.

It was founded by the late Dr Derek Gray in 1980 and it has, since then, provided an opportunity for school learners from primary school to grade 12, who have an interest in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM), to exhibit their projects and to be judged on their skills and enthusiasm for science. The Expo is committed to the development of a strong base of educated and skilled South Africans in the fields of STEM.

More than 60 000 learners from schools in 26 regions around the country submit their science projects, exhibiting research, design, entrepreneurship, innovation and inventiveness at the regional Expos, with over a thousand learners participating in the national finals. Learners have the opportunity to discuss their work with professional scientists, judges, educators, learners from other schools, parents as well as other interested community members. Not only are learners increasing their awareness of the wonders of science but participation in the Expo will broaden their knowledge and scientific horizons.

This year the SARL is also sponsoring a special award at the Expo for best final entry in the field of RF and electronics.

RADIO TECHNOLOGY IN ACTION NEXT SATURDAY IN PORT ELIZABETH

You have a few more days to book for the SARL Radio Technology in Action Symposium which will be held at the Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University in Port Elizabeth next Saturday, 27 July. The programme and booking details can be found on www.sarl.org.za or you can receive it in your mailbox by sending an email to rta@sarl.org.za with RTA PE in the subject line.

The programme features interesting presentations and hands-on demonstrations such as building a VFO for a Software Defined Radio and how to operate your station remotely. Riaan Greef ZS4PR will be making contacts from the station at the National Amateur Radio Centre from the RTA.

Booking is preferred as it will assist with the catering and making sure that the CD, kit and digital multimeter are available. Pre-booking closes by mid-day on 25 July. Walking registration will be taken on the Saturday morning.

There is some road construction on University way This means that the NMMU South Campus entrance will be closed. Access to the South Campus will only be possible through the North Campus or via the South Campus Marine Drive entrance near the Cape Recife / SAMREC road.

For a map and details of how to get to the venue visit the PE RTA page via a link on www.sarl.org.za

HERE COMES THE SUN - THERE GOES THE SUN

While the sun is currently at the projected peak of its 11 year solar cycle, our home star has been relatively quiet in the area of sunspots and their effect on radio propagation here on planet Earth. Amateur Radio Newline's Norm Seeley, KI7UP, explains. "Researchers say that this year's solar maximum is

shaping up to be the weakest in some 100 years and the next one could be even quieter. This according to scientists who study the solar cycle as it affects our home planet.

One of these is David Hathaway of NASA's Marshall Space Flight Centre in Huntsville, Alabama. In an early July teleconference Hathaway told reporters that we are witnessing the smallest solar maximum we have seen in the Space Age. Also that the next one, cycle 25 could be even quieter.

About every 11 years, the sun goes through a cycle defined by an increasing and then decreasing number of sunspots. The current cycle known as Solar Cycle 24 has been underway since 2011. Its peak was expected in 2013 but there have been fewer sunspots observed this year compared with the maximums of the last several cycles.

Sunspots are the dark temporary regions on the surface of our home star that are thought to be caused by interaction between the sun's plasma and its magnetic field. They are also the source of the solar flares and Coronal Mass Ejections that in turn send charged particles into space. Those that hit Earth hold the potential of causing damage to satellites and producing surges in power grids. But they also affect radio propagation by causing short-term High Frequency blackouts while at the same time producing some dazzling auroras above the planet's poles that radio amateurs and others have long used for propagation experimentation.

THE TRANSATLANTIC 144 MHz CHALLENGE

There are currently three 144 MHz beacons beaming across the Atlantic Ocean to provide early warnings of Tropo Ducting Propagation over thousands of kilometres. These beacons are: WA1ZMS on 144,428 MHz, GB3WGI on 144,487 MHz and CS4BFA on 144,408 MHz. Traces of CW signals have been heard from the US beacon, so keep an eye on the William Hepburn Tropo Ducting Forecasts.

There are two lovely Brendon Trophies waiting in Dublin that will be presented by the Irish Transmitters Society to the first two radio amateurs who bridge the Atlantic on 144 MHz. Who will be the first ZR/ZS station to achieve a two-way 144 MHz Transatlantic contact on any transmission mode? Several years ago Pieter Jacobs, ZR1AEE (now V51PJ) while still at Cape Town ran a series of tests with PY2ANE, and only bits and pieces were decoded from Brazil while using the older version of WSJT digital modes.

HABEX TO TAKE FLIGHT

The High Altitude Balloon Experiment or HABEX will yet again be flying high.

We aim to break our current record of 34 000 meters. If you want to add a payload or participate in the project, please contact us on zs6cog@gmail.com or visit the HABEX website at www.habex.za.net for info on HABEX.

The next HABEX meeting will be announced on this national bulletin soon.

LEAGUE NEWS

APPLICATIONS FOR MEMBERSHIP Applications for membership of the SARL have been received from the following persons: Gert Connaway, Listener member

Any objections against the acceptance of the applications must reach the Secretary before or on the Tuesday after this bulletin.

To date more than 900 members have renewed their membership.

CLUB AFFILIATION WITH THE SARL The SARL has entered a new financial year and membership fees became payable on 30 June. At the same time all club affiliation expired and will have to be renewed.

Club affiliation to the SARL is free. To renew the affiliation, it is only necessary to fill in the form available on the web. Send the completed form to admin@sarl.org.za. This is necessary to ensure that the information the SARL has on the club, is kept up to date.

There are many advantages to affiliation - do not delay sending in the form.

CLUB NEWS

BORDER RADIO CLUB ELECTS NEW COMMITTEE The Border Radio Club in East London recently held its AGM. The new committee is as follows.

Chairman - Anthony Forteath, ZS2BQ Secretary / Vice Chairman - Ivan Newman, ZS2ILN Treasurer - Aloma Basson, ZR2AW Committee member - Andrew Middleton, ZS2EL Committee member - Hennie Coetzee, ZS2HC

CENTURION RADIO AMATEUR CLUB NEW COMMITTEE

At the AGM held on the 13th July 2013 the following members were unanimously elected to the committee:

Chairman - Pam Momberg, ZS6APT Vice Chairman - Gawie Basson, ZS6GJJ Secretary - Billy Strumpher, ZS6WPS Treasurer - Pam Momberg, ZS6APT Technical - Johan Keulder, ZS6CAQ

CONTEST NEWS

160M CONTEST Results of the 160m contest held from the 20th to the 24th June 2013. Sixty two stations were on the air and 5 logs were received. The majority of the contacts were SSB but quite a few CW contacts were made as well. Johann van Zijl, ZS4DZ, even managed to make a contact with ZS8Z.

The results are as follows:- 1st Lukas, ZS6LH - 208 points 2nd Johann, ZS4DZ - 169 points 3rd Christo, ZS3R - 159 points 4th Allan, ZS1LS - 59 points

One check log was received. Thanks to all who sent their logs in.

IARU HF CHAMPIONSHIPS - ZS9HQ We would like to thank Joop ZS6C, Theunis ZS2EC and Geoff ZS6GRL who took the time and effort to get ZS9HQ on the air. In total 212 contacts were made with 100 being CW contacts.

HF PROPAGATION REPORT

Hannes Coetzee, ZS6BZP, reports that the solar activity is expected to remain at low levels. Sunspot AR1793 has a 'beta-gamma' magnetic field that harbors energy for M-class solar flares. All other visible sunspots are stable.

If you want to do your own frequency predictions, the expected effective sunspot number for the week will be around 63.

All the bands from 20 to 10 m will provide lots of DX fun with 20 m providing the best openings with 15 m not far behind. There can also be some 10 m openings on east-west sunlit paths.

Please visit www.spaceweather.co.za for further information.

DIARY OF EVENTS

27 July RTA in Port Elizabeth 3 - 4 August - Hamnet Winter Challenge 30 August East Rand Radio Branch AGM at 14:00

SARL News invites clubs and individuals to submit news items of interest to radio amateurs and short-wave listeners. Submit news items - if possible in both English and Afrikaans to www.sarl.org.za/newsinbox.asp, not later than the Thursday preceding the bulletin date.

The SARL also invites you to listen to Amateur Radio Today every Sunday morning at 10:00 CAT on 145,750 MHz in the Pretoria area, with relays on 7 082, 7 205, and 17 660 kHz. There is also a podcast by ZS6RO. For a web-stream and Echolink by ZS6FCS, visit www.sarl.org.za, click on 'Amateur Radio Today', go down the green column and click on 'LISTEN ON THE WEB'. A repeat transmission can be heard on Mondays at 16:30 UTC on 3 230 kHz. The website also lists various other retransmissions. Reception reports, comments and suggestions are invited. Send an email to artoday@sarl.org.za. Sentech sponsors the transmissions on the non-amateur frequencies.

You have listened to a bulletin of the South African Radio League compiled and edited by Louis Kirstein, ZS1LK.

Thank you for listening, 73.

/EX